WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1.   A computer program for generating animation pictures, comprising the steps of:

5   designating a first area in a source picture;

          designating a second area in the source picture;

          generating a start picture from a portion of the source picture which extends in the first area;

          generating an end picture from a portion of the source picture which

10   extends in the second area;

          designating at least one third area in the source picture, the third area extending between the first and second areas;

          generating an intermediate picture from a portion of the source picture which extends in the third area;

15   generating an image file of a prescribed format which contains data representative of animation pictures including the start picture, the intermediate picture, and the end picture;

          relating the image file with an audio file containing data representative of audio information;

20   generating a file group including the image file and the audio file; and

          recording the file group on a recording medium.

2.   A computer program for generating animation pictures, comprising

25   the steps of:

          designating a first area in a source picture;

          designating a second area in the source picture;

          generating a start picture from a portion of the source picture which

extends in the first area;

generating an end picture from a portion of the source picture which extends in the second area;

combining a portion of the start picture and a portion of the end

5   picture into an intermediate picture;

generating an image file of a prescribed format which contains data representative of animation pictures including the start picture, the intermediate picture, and the end picture;

relating the image file with an audio file containing data

10   representative of audio information;

generating a file group including the image file and the audio file; and

recording the file group on a recording medium.

15   3.   A computer program for generating animation pictures, comprising the steps of:

designating a first area in a source picture;

designating a second area in the source picture;

generating a start picture from a portion of the source picture which

20   extends in the first area;

generating an end picture from a portion of the source picture which extends in the second area;

designating at least one third area in the source picture, the third area extending between the first and second areas;

25   generating an intermediate picture from a portion of the source picture which extends in the third area;

generating an image file of a prescribed format which contains data representative of animation pictures including the start picture, the

intermediate picture, and the end picture;

relating the image file with an audio file containing data representative of audio information;

generating a file group including the image file and the audio file;

5 and

transmitting the file group toward an external device.

4. A computer program for generating animation pictures, comprising the steps of:

10 designating a first area in a source picture;

designating a second area in the source picture;

generating a start picture from a portion of the source picture which extends in the first area;

generating an end picture from a portion of the source picture which

15 extends in the second area;

combining a portion of the start picture and a portion of the end picture into an intermediate picture;

generating an image file of a prescribed format which contains data representative of animation pictures including the start picture, the

20 intermediate picture, and the end picture;

relating the image file with an audio file containing data representative of audio information;

generating a file group including the image file and the audio file; and

25 transmitting the file group toward an external device.

5. A computer program for reproducing animation pictures, comprising the steps of:

deciding whether or not an audio file containing data representative of audio information is selected as an object to be reproduced;

accessing an image file in a file group in which the audio file is included when it is decided that the audio file is selected as an object to be
5   reproduced, the image file containing data representative of animation pictures; and

reproducing the accessed image file.

6.   A method of generating animation pictures, comprising the steps of:
10   designating a first area in a source picture;

designating a second area in the source picture;

cutting a portion, which extends in the first area, from the source picture to generate a start picture;

cutting a portion, which extends in the second area, from the source
15 picture to generate an end picture;

designating at least one third area in the source picture, the third area extending between the first and second areas;

cutting a portion, which extends in the third area, from the source picture to generate an intermediate picture;
20   generating an image file which contains data representative of animation pictures including the start picture, the intermediate picture, and the end picture;

relating the image file with an audio file containing data representative of audio information; and
25   generating a file group including the image file and the audio file.

7.   A method as recited in claim 6, further comprising the step of recording the file group on a removable recording medium.

8.   An apparatus for generating animation pictures, comprising:

first means for designating a first area in a source picture;

second means for designating a second area in the source picture;

third means for cutting a portion, which extends in the first area designated by the first means, from the source picture to generate a start picture;

fourth means for cutting a portion, which extends in the second area designated by the second means, from the source picture to generate an end picture;

fifth means for designating at least one third area in the source picture, the third area extending between the first and second areas;

sixth means for cutting a portion, which extends in the third area designated by the fifth means, from the source picture to generate an intermediate picture;

seventh means for generating an image file which contains data representative of animation pictures including the start picture, the intermediate picture, and the end picture;

eighth means for relating the image file generated by the seventh means with an audio file containing data representative of audio information; and

ninth means for generating a file group including the image file and the audio file.

9.   An apparatus as recited in claim 8, further comprising tenth means for recording the file group generated by the ninth means on a removable recording medium.

10. A method of reproducing animation pictures, comprising the steps of:

deciding whether or not an audio file containing data representative of audio information is selected as an object to be reproduced;

5   accessing an image file in a file group in which the audio file is included when it is decided that the audio file is selected as an object to be reproduced, the image file containing data representative of animation pictures; and

reproducing the accessed image file.

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11. An apparatus for reproducing animation pictures which comprises:

first means for deciding whether or not an audio file containing data representative of audio information is selected as an object to be reproduced;

15   second means for accessing an image file in a file group in which the audio file is included when the first means decides that the audio file is selected as an object to be reproduced, the image file containing data representative of animation pictures; and

third means for reproducing the image file accessed by the second

20 means.